

August 3, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the mother of an 8 year old son with developmental, physical and intellectual disabilities and a 12 year old daughter without disabilities. A couple of years ago I took my son Jackson to our neighborhood city park only to discover that they had removed the JennSwing (a swing for children with disabilities). I promptly sent a letter to Leroy Eadie at the Parks department asking for a meeting to discuss the lack of equipment and accessibility in the City of Spokane parks. To better inform myself before that meeting I went to all 55 parks in the city that had playgrounds and took pictures. Of the 55 parks only 2 had equipment for children with disabilities. Those 2 parks only had 1 JennSwing each. Essentially in the whole city of Spokane, the only playground equipment for children with disabilities is 2 swings. During my visits to one of the parks I witnessed 4 little boys playing. One of the boys was in a wheelchair. He sat there in the wheelchair and watched his friends play. He was completely excluded. That to me is not only unacceptable, it is discriminatory. **EVERY** child in our city deserves the opportunity to play at the park.

Spokane prides itself on its beautiful parks. But there are hundreds of children in the city that are essentially left out of the parks because they are disabled. When I met with the city to discuss this issue, it was communicated to me that there were plans to build a new playground in Riverfront Park. I believe this is a great opportunity for the city to build an inclusive playground that has accessible equipment so that children like my son can finally play in the park. Cities all over the country are recognizing the importance of inclusive playgrounds, it's about time Spokane does.

I sincerely hope you will consider the need to fund and build a playground that will include all the children that live in Spokane. The City of Spokane should not continue to build playgrounds in our city that purposely exclude a group of children.

Here are articles about some inclusive playgrounds:

<http://news10.com/2015/01/21/milton-unveils-plans-for-disability-accessible-playground/>

<http://www.pe.com/articles/park-761323-city-great.html>

<http://www.press-citizen.com/story/news/local/2015/06/02/arc-southeast-iowa-unveils-disability-friendly-playground/28385249/>

<http://kron4.com/2015/04/14/nations-most-inclusive-park-to-celebrate-grand-opening-saturday-in-palo-alto/>

If you have any further questions or would like to speak to me in person, please feel free to call me at 509-710-5530.

Sincerely,

Stacey Klim